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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
March 11, 2005

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**SACRAMENTO MAN SENTENCED TO 8 YEARS IMPRISONMENT
FOR ROLE IN MULTI-MILLION DOLLAR
NIGERIAN ADVANCE FEE FRAUD SCHEME**

Defendant also Forfeits Home and is Stripped of U.S. Citizenship

SACRAMENTO--United States Attorney McGregor W. Scott announced today that ROLAND ADAMS, 38, of Sacramento, the owner of Adams Business Services, was sentenced today by United States District Judge Edward J. Garcia to 97 months imprisonment for conspiring to commit mail and wire fraud, and conspiring to launder money in connection with an international fraud scheme that resulted in losses to victims exceeding \$1 million. The defendant pleaded guilty on August 18, 2003.

This case was the product of an extensive investigation by the United States Secret Service, with the assistance of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police.

At sentencing, Judge Garcia noted the sophistication of the scheme that lost many victims their life savings and commented upon ADAMS' unsuccessful attempts to minimize his role in the international fraud scheme. Parole has been abolished in the federal system, and ADAMS will be required to serve at least 85% of the prison time imposed.

U.S. Attorney McGregor W. Scott said: "Nigerian advance fee schemes are a pernicious form of fraud. Although they are merely annoying to many people who receive solicitations by mail, fax, or e-mail, they can be financially devastating for those who are duped. The sentence imposed on Roland Adams today should serve both as a warning to perpetrators that they will be brought to justice, and as an alert to the public to avoid responding to suspicious entreaties involving get-rich-quick schemes."

According to Assistant United States Attorney Camil Skipper, who prosecuted the case, at the time of his guilty plea, ADAMS admitted that between February 2001 and June 2002, he conspired with others in Nigeria, South Africa, and Canada to operate a Nigerian advance fee fraud scheme (also known as "4-1-9" fraud after the section of the Nigerian penal code that addresses fraud schemes). As part of the scheme, ADAMS and international co-conspirators mailed solicitation letters, purportedly from officials of African governments or government

agencies, to hundreds of potential victims around the world. The solicitation letters sought assistance in diverting to private use millions of dollars purportedly held in investment accounts or trusts. In exchange for the victims' agreement to receive the diverted funds and return the substantial majority to the purported official, the victims were promised a portion of the diverted funds. In fact, there were no such funds.

Victims, who often communicated with ADAMS and his co-conspirators using e-mail, were assessed "fees" to facilitate the diversion of the fictitious funds. Those fees typically amounted to 1% of the total fund transfer amount, totaling anywhere from several thousand to several hundred thousand dollars. Some victims were required to send the fees to specified individuals in South Africa and Canada; other victims were instructed to wire fees to other accounts around the world. A portion of the funds collected by his international co-conspirators was forwarded to ADAMS in Sacramento.

As part of the scheme, ADAMS posed as a banker in his communications with victims. ADAMS registered the Internet domain names Afribankcorp.com, Bancofafrica.com, and Bancofeasterncarribean.com [sic] and had web sites created for the fictitious banks. (These banks supposedly held the diverted funds.) Victims were directed to these web sites, which were used to track the progress of the transactions and give the fraud scheme the illusion of legitimacy.

In addition to a sentence of imprisonment, Judge Garcia ordered ADAMS to pay \$1,201,092.90 in restitution to victims of the scheme. It is anticipated that ADAMS's Elk Grove home and over \$87,000 seized from various bank and investment accounts, which were forfeited to the government following a non-jury trial before Judge Garcia on September 22, 2003, will be used to partially satisfy ADAMS's restitution obligation. A laptop computer and Internet domain names used in the scheme were also forfeited to the government.

ADAMS also was found guilty on April 14, 2004, following a jury trial, of unlawful procurement of citizenship or naturalization and making a false statement. The jury found that ADAMS, a naturalized United States citizen originally from Nigeria, made false statements during his naturalization interview. Judge Garcia sentenced ADAMS to 97 months and 60 months imprisonment for those offenses, to be served concurrently with his 97-month sentence on the fraud and money laundering convictions. Pursuant to his conviction, Judge Garcia today ordered that ADAMS be stripped of his U.S. citizenship. It is anticipated that ADAMS will be deported following service of his sentence.

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